SEVIS Batch Webinar FAQ

April 10, 2015 – Webinar briefing on SEVIS Batch information

SEVIS 6.21 Release Date

Q: **What is the date for the release?**
A: June 26, 2015.

Q: **Is this date firm? Is there any chance of it changing?**
A: June 26, 2015 is a fixed date. We do not anticipate it changing. However, if unforeseen problems arise, the date could change.

Q: **On a scale of one to ten, what is SEVP's confidence level on this date?**
A: On a scale of one to ten, 9.8 is SEVP's level of confidence on the June 26, 2015 release date.

System Outage

Q: **How long will SEVIS be down?**
A: SEVIS is scheduled to be down for 48 hours. It could be longer. This is a big release. We will inform everyone as soon as we know if the system will be down longer.

Q: **Why will the system be down so long?**
A: This is a large release. After the code is deployed into SEVIS, we have to do more testing to make sure everything is working as it should. Access to SEVIS will be restored when we are confident the system is working properly.

Q: **Will SEVIS real time interface be available during this time?**
A: No. SEVIS will not be available at all during this time.

Trainee/Internship Placement Plan (T/IPP)

Q: **Is there a date for the final SEVIS 6.21 T/IPP release?**
A: June 26, 2015.

Q: **Do you have an update on when the schema for the T/IPP changes will be released? Sponsors are concerned that they will not have enough time to test.**
A: An updated schema was released in late March 2015 and is available on http://www.ice.gov/sevis/schools/sevis. All batch functionality is included in the schema and has been released to the Alpha Test Environment.

Q: **Does the version of the T/IPP that is in the Alpha Test Environment reflect the final version of the form?**
A: Yes. The version in Alpha is the final version of the form. Department of State's policy office may still make minor changes to the instructions, but the form fields are final.

Q: **Is Department of State (DoS) working with batch vendors on the DS-7002?**
A: Department of State works closely with SEVP on changes to SEVIS and to inform users of changes in SEVIS. DoS has been a part of SEVP's conference calls and webinars for batch users. While DoS has not had separate sessions with batch vendors to discuss the T/IPP, the schema is available and vendors have been able to ask questions during the calls. DoS has held its own T/IPP related webinars and has communicated directly with sponsors on the T/IPP. With all of this outreach, batch vendors should know about the changes in the June release.

Q: **The print out of the DS-7002 in Alpha has space for signatures. It was our understanding from previous webinars that only the date of the signature would be printed on the form. We were also informed that we would be able to collect digital signatures on the form**
A: You are correct. SEVIS will only require the dates of the signatures. You will still be required to sign the printed form either digitally or manually.

Q: **How are sponsors supposed to collect electronic signatures on the DS-7002, if the people who are supposed to sign are outside the United States?**
A: The fillable version of the PDF will still be available for sponsors to use. Sponsors can use this version of the form to send to individuals outside the United States to collect signatures and then enter the dates in SEVIS. Signature dates are not required until the record is validated.

Batch Schema

Q: **Who do we contact if we have questions about the schema?**
A: Email SEVIS.Batch@ice.dhs.gov with batch-related questions or problems. Our batch specialist monitors this box. If something is wrong, this person will test it and help us find the problem so we can fix it. You can also email SEVISTechnicalFeedback@ice.dhs.gov.

Q: **Is there a document that describes the changes to the schema?**
A: Yes. Documentation related to the schema can be found on ice.gov at SEVP Schools and Programs under the Certification tab at Technical Guidance and Information Resources.

Addresses

Q: **During the webinar you stated SEVIS will "batch back corrected addresses." What does that mean?**
A: Address Doctor is picky about how addresses are formatted. Address Doctor will correct addresses that do not meet USPS standard format. SEVIS will send back the changed address, as part of the response through batch, so you can keep your records updated.

Q: **For batched addresses, is the street address validated or will only the city, state, and zip code fields be validated?**
A: Address Doctor will only validate street address (currently Address line 1) and city, state, zip code. At a minimum, batched addresses must validate on city, state, and zip code.

Q: **We understand that it is possible to submit an override if Address Doctor does not validate an address that we know to be valid. Can we submit the override with the original batch submission or do we have to wait for the address to be rejected before we can do the override?**
A: You can submit an override with the original submission.

Q: **For F/M students, what happens to a registration event if the address submitted does not validate? Will the registration event be rejected? Is this also true for validation of J exchange visitors?**
A: If the address does not validate and if no override was submitted with the registration sent via batch, the registration will be rejected. The same is true for J validation events.

Q: **Must a DSO submit an override when registering a student with an address known to be a problem? Can the entry of addresses be separated from the registration event?**
A: If it is a known address issue, submit an override with it. We will not separate the entry of addresses from the registration or validation. This ensures that we get address information in a timely manner.

Q: **Will international addresses be validated?**
A: No. SEVIS will only validate U.S. addresses.

Q: **How can schools and sponsors validate addresses before entering them into SEVIS?**
A: SEVP is not making any software available outside of SEVIS. There are many websites that can be used to verify U.S. addresses. The USPS ZIP Code look up service can verify addresses.

Q: **Will the batched-back, corrected addresses from SEVIS overwrite the addresses in our batch software? Is SEVP and DoS working with vendors on this?**

A: This is a question best addressed by specific batch vendors. SEVP will send a report of the changed addresses, but SEVIS will do nothing more than that. The vendor would best be able to explain what, if anything will be done with that information.

Q: Can SEVP return the corrected addresses to us in separate tags such as Address 1, city, state, zip instead of in one "CorrectedAddress" tag?

A: SEVP will update the batch schema aftger the June release. We will coordinate with batch users on the changes and the timing..

Q: How is Address line two validated?

A: Address line two is not validated. It will also not be changed.

Q: Can schools and sponsors override a rejected address in batch?

A: Yes. You can override a rejected address. It is part of the batch schema. We provide the override codes in the batch API, so your batch vendor can develop their software to allow you to do this.

Q: How can an address be validated if a rural town shares a zip code with another town?

A: We have not yet found a case where a real address does not validate, even if the zip code is shared by two towns. If you have a specific example, please send it to SEVISTechnicalFeedback@ice.dhs.gov. You may also test it yourself in the Alpha Test Environment.

Q: Will there be a limit on the number of overrides allowed? Could a school or sponsor submit an override for all of its addresses?

A: When you submit an override, you must provide a reason for the override. If all of your addresses are overridden, you may be asked to explain the situation to the people who work in Compliance.

Q: How will the data from the corrected address be sent to schools and sponsors; on a report or on a batch rejection event?

A: When you submit data via batch, you get back a file that tells you what was successful and what was not. We are not going to fail a lot of the addresses, but they will be corrected. We will batch back to you the corrected addresses. It will show up as a corrected address in that file. That file is in XML format. We have provided that format as part of the schema.

Q: Is SEVP suggesting that we use our general campus address for Address line one?

A: Yes. Use this address for line one, but also be sure to use the second line to capture actual residence hall information. We need to be sure that SEVP can communicate with students, if necessary.

Q: Some large universities do not have street addresses, such as, 123 Main Street. How would we handle those addresses?

A: Every university has some sort of standard address. If you have a specific address, send it to SEVISTechnicalFeedback@ice.gov. Test your addresses in the Alpha Test

Environment. We found that some university campuses addresses were already in the USPS database.

Q: Will SEVIS validate the primary site of activity and the secondary site of activity?
A: Yes. SEVIS will validate all sites of activity addresses.

Q: How will Address Doctor validate apartment numbers?
A: Address Doctor will validate apartment numbers if the address is batched in one of the following formats:

Exchange Visitors

```
<USAddress>
        <Address1>1600 South Joyce Street, APT# 1230</Address1>
        <Address2></Address2>
        <City>Arlington</City>
        <State>VA</State>
        <PostalCode>22202</PostalCode>
</USAddress>

<SiteOfActivity xsi:type="SOA">
        <Address1>1111 Army Navy Drive,  #1234</Address1>
        <Address2></Address2>
        <City>Arlington</City>
        <State>VA</State>
        <PostalCode>22202</PostalCode>
        <SiteName>GoodSite-ButNoRouting</SiteName>
        <PrimarySite>true</PrimarySite>
</SiteOfActivity>

<USAddress>
        <Address1>1600 South Joyce Street, Apt. #4C</Address1>
        <Address2>Address 2</Address2>
        <City>Arlington</City>
        <State>VA</State>
        <PostalCode>22202</PostalCode>
</USAddress>

<SiteOfActivity xsi:type="SOA">
        <Address1>1111 Army Navy Dr. #221</Address1>
        <Address2></Address2>
        <City>Arlington</City>
        <State>VA</State>
        <PostalCode>22202</PostalCode>
        <SiteName>GoodSite-ButNoRouting</SiteName>
        <PrimarySite>true</PrimarySite>
</SiteOfActivity>
```

Student

```
<USAddress>
        <Address1>1600 South Joyce St, APT# 18</Address1>
        <Address2>BLDG 2</Address2>
        <City>Arlington</City>
        <State>VA</State>
        <PostalCode>22202</PostalCode>
```

```
                    </USAddress>

                    <USAddress>
                        <Address1>1111 Army Navy Dr. #331</Address1>
                        <Address2>Address2</Address2>
                        <City>Arlington</City>
                        <State>VA</State>
                        <PostalCode>22202</PostalCode>
                    </USAddress>

                    <USAddress>
                        <Address1>1111 Army Navy Drive, BLDG #A, Suite 101</Address1>
                        <Address2>Address2</Address2>
                        <City>Arlington</City>
                        <State>VA</State>
                        <PostalCode>22202</PostalCode>
                    </USAddress>
```

Address Doctor

Q: **What is Address Doctor?**
A: Address Doctor is the tool that SEVP uses to confirm that the address entered into SEVIS is a valid address. It also reformats an address to meet U.S. Postal Service's standards.

Q: **Is Address Doctor only for batch or will it be used in RTI as well?**
A: Address Doctor will be used to validate addresses in both batch and Real Time Interface (RTI).

Q: **Will Address doctor be used in both F/M and J SEVIS?**
A: Yes. Address Doctor will be used on both F/M and J SEVIS.

Q: **Must schools and sponsors obtain their own licenses for Address Doctor, in order to use it in SEVIS?**
A: No. Schools and sponsors do not need to purchase licenses for Address Doctor. SEVP has purchased the license, so that SEVIS can use it to check addresses entered by users.

Q: **Should schools and sponsors purchase Address Doctor licenses to validate addresses before submitting them?**
A: This is a decision schools and sponsors must make on their own. Schools and sponsors are not required to validate addresses before submitting them. SEVIS will validate the address and let users know what is wrong.

Q: **Will Address Doctor recognize campuses addresses?**
A: Address Doctor may not recognize some campus addresses. We know the U.S. Postal Service delivers to a main campus address. The campus post office routes mail to the proper place on campus. SEVP recommends putting the campus address in Address line one and the dormitory housing information in Address line two.

Name Changes

Q: **Can you clarify the name changes in SEVIS? Will there be two sets of names in SEVIS; Passport name, preferred name, surname/primary name, and given name?**

A: SEVIS will contain the following name fields:

- Surname/Primary Name
- Given Name
- Preferred Name
- Passport Name
- Legacy Name

Only the Surname/Primary Name will be required in SEVIS. The other four name fields help in identifying the nonimmigrant.

Q: **If we do not correct a nonimmigrant's name in our database so it matches the changed name in SEVIS, will all future batches fail because the name does not match?**

A: No. Updates in batch are based on SEVIS ID, not by name. However, if the name is included in a batch update, it will fail if it does not meet SEVIS standards.

Batch Vendors

Q: **Some schools and sponsors worry that their batch vendors will not deliver updated software before June 26, 2015. What should they do?**

A: There is nothing that SEVP or the Department of State can do. Schools and sponsors must talk to their batch software vendors. The new schema will go into effect after the June 26, 2015 release. Batches that use the old schema will fail. Schools and sponsors can still use SEVIS Real Time Interface (RTI) to manage their tasks.

Q: **Who should we contact at our batch vendors; the technical people at my institution or someone specific at the vendor?**

A: Talk to the technical people at your institution first. They may have a good contact person at the vendor. If you do not know who to contact, email SEVISTechnicalFeedback@ice.dhs.gov. SEVP has spoken with many of the vendors and may have a way to contact them.

Miscellaneous

Q: **Will the new Employment Information page affect batch in any way?**

A: No. The Employment Information page does not require any new information. It displays information already in SEVIS.

Q: **Will SEVIS generate a report for schools and sponsors to inform them of addresses that need to be corrected?**

A: Yes. SEVIS will provide an alert to inform schools and sponsors which students and exchange visitors in Initial and Active statuses have addresses that did not validate. This alert will appear on the Alerts page. SEVIS will also provide you with a report of students and exchange visitors with valid addresses that were changed to conform to the USPS standard. The report will appear on a new SEVIS Downloads page.

The alerts and reports for schools and sponsors will not appear immediately after the release is deployed. SEVP did not want to run the name conversion and the address validation at the same time. SEVIS will run the address validation on existing SEVIS records over the course of a few weeks.

Q: How soon after an address fails to verify would we receive an alert?
A: A student or exchange visitor would appear on the alert:

- If the address already in SEVIS for an *existing* student or exchange visitor failed to validate.
- If Address Doctor was not available at the time the address data was submitted.

When you submit an address directly into SEVIS, you will know immediately if there is a problem with the address. You can either correct the address you entered or do an override.

If you submit the data via batch; after the batch is processed, the batch report will tell you what is wrong with the address.

Q: How can a school or sponsor official access the Alpha Environment?
A: Anyone can log into the SEVIS Alpha Test Environment. The URL for the site is https://egov.ice.gov/alphasevis/.

Because the Alpha SEVIS site was cloned from the Beta Environment; many schools, sponsors, and users in Beta already exist in the Alpha Environment. Schools and sponsors that do not use Beta can create a school or sponsor in Alpha. The newly-created school or sponsor would need to be "adjudicated" by the batch specialist. Email SEVIS.Batch@ice.dhs.gov for guidance.

Q: What kind of testing should we be doing in the Alpha Test Environment?
A: You can use the Alpha Test Environment in a number of ways. You can test your batch functionality to see if you are getting the results you expect. You can also use it to see how SEVIS RTI will look and function after the June 2015 release.

Q: When will SEVIS 6.21 release changes be pushed to beta? Our batch system is connected to beta.
A: The changes for release 6.21 will not be pushed to Beta until much closer to the actual release in June 2015. The Beta site reflects functionality that is in current SEVIS Production site. It will always reflect the Production Environment. The Alpha site is the development site where batch vendors can begin testing their software for future SEVIS functionality.

SEVP highly recommends that batch institutions access the Alpha site now to test the functionality that will be coming to both batch and RTI.

Q: **Will additional personnel be available to assist the batch specialist when the release goes live? We are concerned that one person may not be able to handle the temporary increased workload after the release.**

A: If we need more people, we will add additional resources. SEVP hopes that the batch testing in Alpha is rigorous enough that we will have identified most of the issues before hand. SEVP can help with problems in SEVIS; but we will not be able to help if the problem is with the batch software.

Q: **When will copies of the new Forms I-20 and DS-2019 be available?**

A: Copies of the new Forms will be available in the May 8, 2015 Webinar. The Alpha Test Environment will soon be updated, so they can be generated there as well.